HISTORY
OF
FINCHER METHODIST CHURCH

Meansville
Georgia

1822-1951
Fincher Methodist Church was organized in 1822. Among the charter members were Joseph Fincher and his wife, Mary Horne Fincher, for whom the church was named. They came to Pike County from South Carolina soon after they were married in 1821, and settled here on lands in this community. It was on their land that the first church was built.

Among the early members were the Slade family who came to Pike County in 1824. In 1831 the Lifsey family moved to Pike County and united with Fincher Church. Other early families were the Barretts, the Howells, the Storeys, the Millers and the Halls. There must have been other families represented in the early history of the church, but there is no available list of the charter members.

The records show that Andrew Hamil was the first pastor. He came to Pike County in 1823 and was the first Methodist preacher who came to this part of Georgia. There is no record of who conducted the services from the time of the organization until he came. Up to 1830, Georgia and Florida were in the South Carolina Conference.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Baltimore, Maryland in 1784. The Methodist Episcopal Church South began its work in 1845 continuing until the unification of the Methodist Churches. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South on April 29, 1938 completed its constitutional voting process and by great majority put its seal in favor of the Plan of Union. The final session of the North Georgia Annual
Conference of The Methodist Episcopal Church South was held in Atlanta, Ga., November 22, 1939.

In its Declaration of Union, proclaimed and unanimously adopted at the Uniting Conference May 10, 1939 at Kansas City, Missouri, The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church South, and The Methodist Protestant Church became The Methodist Church. On Nov. 23, 1939 the Union of the Annual Conferences of the three churches in North Georgia was certified and they were duly merged into one United Annual Conference, namely, the North Georgia Annual Conference of the Methodist Church. Bishop J. Lloyd Decell presided at this conference.

Although Fincher Methodist Church was established at the earlier date, the deed to the property was not recorded until 1846. The land where the church now stands was given by Biddie Fincher Storey, daughter of Joseph Fincher. The land across the road from the church and the oldest section of the cemetery was given by Joseph Fincher. Later, June 24, 1924, U. L. Taylor gave the land for the new section of the cemetery. The late Mrs. R. R. Carter was chairman of the cemetery committee. Serving with her were J. S. Slade and the late T. A. Lifsey.

The following were the trustees at the time the deed to the church property was recorded: Simon Slade, John Means, James Neal, Colens Moreland, Joseph T. Fincher, Wm. Barrett, Sr., James Barrett, Nathan Boyd and John Lifsey.
A camp ground was established on the church property at a very early date, but for lack of water it was moved to Bluff Springs in 1853. A school was also established on the church property in the early history of the church, but it was consolidated with the Meansville School in 1923.

Fincher Methodist Church was connected with the Zebulon Circuit until the fall of 1866, when the circuit was divided. About that time the Pike Mission, afterward changed to Milner Circuit, was established embracing Milner, Ebenezer, Century Nelson and Fincher. In 1915 Fincher was again put with the Zebulon Charge.

A Sunday School was organized at a very early date.

A Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized about 1902. In 1922, The Ladies Aid was organized, having as its object helping the church and parsonage. Some years later these two groups were combined and met together until their final meeting in August 1940. At this meeting, in keeping with the unified church plans, committees were appointed by the pastor, Rev. W. J. Culpepper, to make plans for the organization meeting of the Woman's Society of Christian Service. The Charter Meeting was held at the Church Sept. 10, 1940 with the pastor in charge. Thirty-seven charter members were enrolled and the following officers were installed:
Mrs. E. L. Taylor - President
Mrs. C. S. Slade - Vice President
Mrs. H. S. Bishop - Recording Secretary
Mrs. C. E. Reeves - Treasurer
Mrs. G. M. Lifsey - Corresponding Secretary
Mrs. C. T. Slade - Secretary of Missinnary Education and Service
Mrs. J. S. Slade - Secretary of Christian Social Relations and Local Church Activities
Mrs. W. M. Slade - Secretary of Student Work
Mrs. T. J. Middlebrooks - Secretary of Young People's Group
Mrs. W. T. Elliott - Secretary of Children's Work
Mrs. W. M. Hartley - Secretary of Literature and Publications
Miss Sara Lifsey - Secretary of Supplies
There have been four other church buildings on this site. The first was a one room log building. Each building since that time has been built larger. The last wooden structure was built in 1905. It had a large auditorium and three Sunday School rooms at the rear, which were built in 1924.

On the morning of Nov. 2, 1941 this building burned to the ground, but before the embers had died away, the trustees met and plans were being made to rebuild a larger and better church building with ample Sunday School facilities.

At a special meeting of Quarterly Conference Nov. 15, 1941, R. R. Carter, T. A. Lifsey, J. S. Slade, W. E. Storey, C. T. Slade, H. S. Bishop and E. L. Taylor were appointed to act as a building committee. R. R. Carter was elected Chairman, E. L. Taylor, Secretary and Treasurer and J. S. Slade Assistant Secretary and Treasurer. T. A. Lifsey's faithful service on this committee and that of the Board of Trustees was terminated by his death June 1, 1944. At the time of his passing, he was the oldest male member of the church.

At a later joint meeting of this appointed committee and the trustees, the following committee was empowered to act as the building committee and to carry on the program to completion: J. S. Slade, C. T. Slade, J. H. Cannafax and E. L. Taylor. This committee with a devotion to the cause has consistently discharged its duties. Due to their energetic activity, their untiring efforts, and their
continuous labors in their faithful and diligent performance of the task and responsibility that had been placed upon them; to the whole-hearted cooperation and loyal support of all officers and members of the church; and to the generosity and good-will of friends, this beautiful church building has been completed and furnished, free of indebtedness Sept. 15, 1944. In addition to the donations made by these friends, a grant was made by the Extension Board of The Methodist Episcopal Church South, and also numerous members and friends made contributions in work. As a place of worship, it becomes a monument to all who had a part in its erection.

In this year of 1944, Rev. D. H. Maxey is the pastor and there are one hundred ninety-nine names on the membership roll of Fincher Methodist Church. The Youngest member being Jerry Danielly, age five, and the oldest, Mrs. Callie Carter Barrett, age eighty-four. There are one hundred fifteen enrolled in Sunday School.

On Sunday September 24th 1944 at a very impressive service, Fincher Methodist Church was dedicated by Bishop Arthur J. Moore as a House for the worship and the service of God. Many former members and friends joined with the present membership in the dedication. Beautiful floral offerings were presented by friends and the Concord and Zebulon Methodist churches, members of the same charge as Fincher.
The new church is a brick veneer structure, with a large auditorium, ample church school facilities, modern heating system and rest rooms. The building was erected at a cost of $12,000.00.

The above was taken from the history compiled at the time of the dedication.

Since 1944 the following Pastors have served:

- A. W. Williams 1945
- S. A. Dailey 1946 1947 1948 1949
- E. W. McDougal 1950

Under the leadership of the following District Superintendents:

- Paul A. Turner 1945 1946 1947 1948

The present membership is 154, the Sunday School enrollment is 130.- The Woman's Society of Christian Service has forty members, and the Methodist Youth Fellowship twenty members. Plans are being made, and funds are being raised for the building of a recreational annex.

June 18 1951.